

even in the canal by which the Main has been connected with a confluent of the Danube; so that *Dreissena* will shortly be an inhabitant of the upper and lower portions of the Danube without being found in the middle part of its course.

“Prof. E. A. Rossmässler, in his popular journal ‘Aus der Heimath,’ pp. 71–78 and 347–350, alludes to the same subject, principally its first appearance in Northern Germany, and states that the animal is able to detach the filaments by which it fixes itself to other objects, and that it is frequently found attached to the tail of crayfishes.

“Dr. Mörch (Ueber *Pinna fluviatilis* (Sander), Malak. Blätt. xii. pp. 110–117) defends his opinion (alluded to in the preceding note), viz. that a shell described by Sander in the year 1780 from a rivulet near Carlsruhe, is *Dreissena*, by an analysis of Sander’s account, and by the analogous fact that the occurrence of the genus *Unio* in Denmark remained unknown to so careful an observer as O. F. Müller (1773). But we cannot accept this as a very convincing argument, inasmuch as *Unio* has been included in all the faunas of the surrounding countries published at that time (of the Baltic provinces, Russia, North Germany, and England); whilst *Dreissena* is not mentioned in any of them.

“Hr. A. Gysser (Mal. Blätt. 1865, Literatur-Blatt, p. 38) also discusses this question. He lives at the place indicated by Sander, and expresses it as his opinion that the rivulet is a locality unfit for *Dreissena*, that Sander’s shell is a *Unio batavus*, his description entirely agreeing with specimens from that locality, with regard to size (two inches) as well as to coloration. A *Dreissena* of two inches would be a great rarity.”

MISCELLANEOUS.

Theory of the Skull and the Skeleton.

To the Editors of the Annals of Natural History.

GENTLEMEN,—In the ‘Reader’ newspaper for the 24th of March of this year, Mr. Seeley published a letter containing an abstract of the paper, then recently read by him, which was published at length in the last Number of your Journal. After reading Mr. Seeley’s communication, I wrote to the editor of the ‘Reader’ the following note, which was published on the 31st of March:—

“March 27, 1866.

“Sir,—If Mr. Seeley will refer to the ‘British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review’ for October 1858, he will find, at the close of a criticism on Prof. Owen’s ‘Archetype and Homologies of the Vertebrate Skeleton,’ a brief outline of the theory that the vertebrate skeleton is a product of mechanical actions, the effects of which have been continually accumulated by inheritance.

“The doctrine which I had there space to present in general outline only, is more fully worked out in the last number of the ‘Principles of Biology,’ issued in December 1865.

“HERBERT SPENCER.”

Mr. Seeley having published his view in the 'Reader,' I concluded that he would see my letter; but I presume that he has not done so, since, in his contribution to your last Number, he makes no reference to the facts alleged in that letter.

Let me add that, while there is identity between Mr. Seeley's doctrine and my own, in so far as both ascribe the formation of bone to tensions and pressures, there is but little community between our interpretations of the physical process by which tensions and pressures have produced their effects.

HERBERT SPENCER.

37, Queen's Gardens, Bayswater,
Nov. 8, 1866.

On the "Fulcrum" of Calamoichthys.

To the Editors of the Annals and Magazine of Natural History.

GENTLEMEN,—I shall feel obliged if you can find space in your valuable Magazine for the following note.

In the abstract of my paper on the new Ganoid Fish from Old Calabar (*Calamoichthys calabaricus*), published in the 'Annals' for August last (No. 104), the word *fulcrum* has been unfortunately used, and may lead to a mistake. The anal fin is described as follows:—"anal (with fulcrum at base anteriorly) in male large, in female small, &c." The fin has a triangularly shaped and thickened portion, covered with scales, at the anterior base of the fin-rays; there are, however, no true *fulcral scales or bones*. The words within parentheses had therefore better be deleted. A detailed description of the fish is published in the 'Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh,' vol. xxiv. part 2.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient Servant,
JOHN ALEX. SMITH.

Edinburgh, Oct. 29, 1866.

The Patagonian Finner. By Dr. BURMEISTER.

In August last a large Finner Whale was taken at the mouth of the River Plata, which I thought might be a *Sibbaldius*; but after studying the body more exactly, I think it is the same as the *Phy-salus* named *P. Patachonicus* in the Catalogue of Seals and Whales in the British Museum. I have made a good drawing of the animal; but the skeleton is lost, because it was impossible to preserve such a large animal, upwards of 58 feet long, without any assistance of good workmen, who are entirely wanting in the locality.

On the Phocæna communis of the North Sea.

By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S. &c.

Professor Lilljeborg writes to me that the Porpoise (*Phocæna communis*) of the North Sea has "the front edges of the dorsal fin